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ABSTRACT

This study, carried out in two phases, was conducted to examine the sources of stress and burnout among faculty developers and the coping strategies the faculty use. In the first phase, in-depth interviews with individual faculty developers and their superiors were carried out in the United States, Canada, Great Britain, Western Europe, and Scandanavia. Another data source was group discussions in national and international workshops for faculty developers from different cultures. Based on the information gathered, a more structured in-depth interview was designed and carried out on a group of faculty developers during an International Conference on Improving University Teaching (1987). The interviewees were 12 faculty members from 12 different countries covering all continents. The content-analysis of the protocolled interviews yielded several categories of reference: symptoms of stress and burnout, sources of stress and burnout, sources of satisfaction, isolation, coping strategies, and miscellaneous. No salient differences resulting from cultural attributes were observed. The results suggest that the stress and burnout syndromes and their sources are intellectual in nature. (Author)

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SOURCES OF STRESS AND BURNOUT AMONG FACULTY DEVELOPERS AND COPING STRATEGIES–CROSS CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract

This study was carried out in two phases. In the first phase, in-depth interviews with individual faculty developers and their superiors were carried out in the U.S., Canada, Great Britain, Western Europe and Scandinavia. Another data source was group discussions in national and international workshops for faculty developers from different cultures. Based on the information gathered, a more structured in-depth interview was designed and carried out on a group of faculty developers during an International Conference on Improving University Teaching (1987).

The interviewees were twelve faculty members from twelve different countries covering all continents. The content-analysis of the protocolled interviews yielded several categories of reference: symptoms of stress and burnout, (intellectual, psychological, and physical), sources of stress and burnout, (gaps between ideology and reality; lack of faculty and administrative support; high expectations and low rewards; constant need to adapt, to adopt, to innovate, to improvise, to change agendas), sources of satisfaction, (encounter with interesting and highly intellectual and stimulating people; rich intellectual life; flexibility and innovation; prestigious occupation), isolation, (lack of opportunities to share problems and responsibility), coping strategies, [(a) personal-cognitive: acquire expertise to ensure success as a means of preventing stress; avoid staying in this occupation many years; delegate and share responsibilities; work in teams; (b) personal-physical: get home and switch off; meditate; relaxing exercises; (c) personal-affective: accept and tolerate; derive satisfaction from helping others; work on intrinsic motivation; and (d) institutional: constructive leadership on the part of academic authorities; faculty exchange; supportive human relations], miscellaneous: (This general category referred to institutional size and to seniority as variables related to stress and burnout). Interestingly, no salient differences resulting from cultural attributes were observed. It appears that the stress and burnout syndromes and their sources are intercultural in nature.

Sources of Stress and Burnout Among Faculty Developers and Coping Strategies—Cross-Cultural Perspectives

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This paper reports the results of a study on sources of stress and burnout among faculty developers and the coping strategies the faculty use. An attempt was made to examine cross-cultural aspects of these phenomena. Compared with other occupations and professions, the scope of research and publication on stress, burnout, and coping processes in academia is very limited. Moreover, recent publications on stress and coping strategies in academia (Melandez & de Guzman, 1985; Seldin, 1987) rely mainly on research findings in other professions and occupations. As for faculty developers, which are a very small and marginal group in the academic community, the study reported herein is probably the first and only one of its kind. The findings, analysis, and conclusions should be viewed therefore as tentative, until verified by further research.

The presentation and analysis of the findings, will be preceded by a brief review of the literature on stress, in different occupations and in particular in academe. Findings and problems of cross-cultural research in this area will also be discussed, followed by a theoretical conceptualization of research on stress.[1] A short discussion on the role of faculty developers and faculty development centers will follow.

Cross-Cultural Aspects of Research On Stress

The causes of occupational stress and the mechanisms used by employees to deal with it have recently drawn the attention of researchers from various disciplines (Cooper, 1980, 1982; Holt, 1982; McLean, 1984; Phillips, 1982). This interest may have been

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[1]These reviews are based on earlier publications by Perlberg and Keinan, (1984); Perlberg, (1985); Perlberg and Keinan, (1986); Keinan and Perlberg, (1987); and Perlberg and Keinan (1988).

motivated by findings relating stressors at work to employees' physical well-being (e.g., Glass, 1977), mental health (Colligan & Murphy, 1979), satisfaction with life and work (Iris & Barrett, 1972; Caplan, Cobb, French, Harrison, & Pinneau, 1975); French, Caplan, & Harrison, 1982; and labor productivity (Mangione & Quinn, 1975).

Studies dealing with cross-cultural differences in stress reactions and coping strategies of workers in various occupational fields are few. These few report significant differences in the stress level and coping mechanisms of workers in different cultures (Cohen, 1976; Cooper & Arbos, 1984; Etzion, Kafry, & Pines, 1982, 1983; Pines, Aronson, & Kafry, 1981; Pines, Kafry, & Etzion, 1980). For example, Cooper and Arbos (1984) report that among managers in non-Western countries, such as Nigeria or Singapore, there is a higher incidence of stress symptoms and mental disorders than among their counterparts in Western countries. Another study found that Israeli managers reported less tedium as well as fewer work-life conflicts than did managers in the United States (Etzion, Kafry, & Pines, 1982).

A salient point overlooked in the literature cited is the extent to which the divergent findings in different cultures are a function of discrepancies in the nature and demands of the job, which are independent of the culture, as opposed to cultural variables such as national values, norms, and ideologies. It is conceivable, for example, that the differences found in stress reactions between the American versus the Israeli manager are not attributable to cultural differences but rather to the character and specific requirements of the job. If the goal is to isolate accurately the influence of cultural variables on stress at work, it is imperative to investigate this issue using an occupation with high cross-cultural similarity. Moreover, by choosing an occupation whose structure and behavioral demands are very similar in different cultures, we may be better able to meet one of the basic requirements of cross-cultural research: dimensional identity (see Berry, 1980; Frijda & Jahoda, 1966).

Perlberg and Keinan (1984; 1986; 1988) and Keinan and Perlberg (1987) attempted to achieve this goal by comparing faculty members in Israeli and American universities. In both countries the universities' organizational structures, programs of study, teaching methods, selection, and promotion of faculty are relatively similar, with the "American system" serving as a model emulated by Israeli universities. Thus, it may be assumed that the use of university faculty to compare the two cultures for experienced stress and its sources will highlight cultural variables while at least partially neutralizing variables generic to the nature and demands of the occupation.

It must be emphasized, however, that it is virtually impossible to identify one occupation that is practiced identically in two separate cultures. For instance, in the case of the Israeli-U.S. comparison of academic faculty, despite the many similarities there are still a number of differences in the job requirements and the nature of occupational demands. These include the need for Israelis to publish and present papers at conferences in a foreign language, the need for Israelis to keep abreast of current academic developments while living far from the centers of learning, the greater course load of Israeli faculty, and the extremely low salaries paid in Israel. Americans, on the other hand, often need to move to distant regions to obtain employment or promotion, whereas in Israel any move would still leave one reasonably close to family and old friends.

Our study of sources of stress among faculty developers attempts to achieve a goal similar to that undertaken previously by Perlberg and Keinan. We are studying an international group of professionals who work in academia, trying to achieve similar goals in similar ways. From analysis of the international literature on higher education and discussions with faculty developers in international conferences and through visits in faculty development centers in different countries, it appears that modern universities and colleges in different cultures are very similar as far as their organizational structure, program of studies, teaching methods, and procedures for selecting and inducting new

faculty. Most important are the great similarities in the reward system that determines tenure and promotion.

It is important to note that there are still cultural or situational differences to be taken into account. Even in the same culture, there might be subcultures and great differences between them. For example, in the United States, one could not compare the reward system in "major league" research universities to the reward system in a remote liberal arts college, which is described by Caplow and McGee (1958) as "bush league" or "academic Siberia" (p. 18). This observation is probably true also for other cultures.

In spite of the above-mentioned difference, the international academic community, more than many other professions, has a lot in common. Thus one could still compare faculty developers in "major league" universities in different cultures. Moreover, even so-called second and third league universities and colleges in different cultures, who aspire to be major league in their own culture or on an international scale, adopt the same reward system. Thus, cross-cultural research in this area might yield interesting results with implication for other professions.

Research on Stress in Academe

Within the limits of this paper it is impossible to review at length even the limited research on stress in academe. The first study in this area was carried out a quarter of a century ago by French, Tupper, and Mueller (1965). Only recently, however, stimulated by the interest in this area in other professions and occupations, educational researchers started to address themselves to the problem of stress in academe. For detailed reviews of this research, the reader should refer to Gmelch et al. (1983, 1984a, 1984b); Melendez and de Guzman (1983); Perlberg and Keinan (1984, 1986, 1988); Perlberg (1985); Keinan and Perlberg (1987); and Seldin (1987). These reviewers relate research in which phenomena such as stress, burnout and coping with stress were studied. It is possible, however, to infer the prevalence of stress in academe from many other studies looked into faculty satisfactions, life styles, quality of life, morale, etc. Recent general reports on higher

education, such as by Bok (1986), Boyer (1987), Clark (1987), and Blackburn et al. (1986, 1987), contain ample information bearing on the problem of stress in academe. This research could shed light on the problem of sources of stress of faculty developers.

Theoretical Constructs

The basic theoretical constructs underlying our investigation are based on Lazarus' Cognitive Theory of Stress (Lazarus, 1966; see also Lazarus, 1981; Lazarus, Averill, & Opton, 1974; Lazarus et al., 1981; Lazarus & Launier, 1978; Lazarus, Kanner, & Folkman, 1980; Lazarus, Coyne, & Folkman, 1982; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984a, 1984b; Folkman, 1984; Folkman & Lazarus, 1985), and on Person Environment Fit theory (P-E-FIT) (French, Rodgers, & Cobb, 1974; French, Caplan, & Harrison, 1982; Caplan, 1987). The basic elements in P-E-Fit theory resemble in many ways Cognitive Theory of Stress.

According to these researchers, stress occurs when the demands of the environment, in the person's eyes, clearly exceed the resources of that person to handle it. Foremost among these resources is how the person construes the situation. Does he or she judge it as threatening or as a challenge? Thus, psychological stress resides neither in the situation nor in the person; it depends on a transaction between the two. It arises from how the person appraises an event and adapts to it. Since demands may be perceived differently by different people in the same environment, be it the work place or any other setting in the same culture, it stands to reason that the difference will be even greater when perceived by people in different cultures.

As for conceptual models of coping, Lazarus (1966), and Monat and Lazarus (1977) suggested differentiating between two general strategies of coping with stress: direct action, in which the person tries to master the stressful transaction with the environment, and indirect or palliative strategies, whereby the person attempts to reduce the disturbances when unable to manage the environment or when action is too costly for the individual. While direct coping strategy is applied externally to the environmental source of stress, indirect or palliative strategies apply internally to one's own behavior or

emotions. Pines and Kafry (1981) and Pines et al. (1981) added an active/inactive dimension to the direct/indirect dimension proposed to Lazurus. Active strategies involve confronting or attempting to change the source of stress or one's own way of reacting to stress, while inactive strategies involve avoidance or denial of the sources of stress by cognitive or physical means.

More recently, Lazarus (1981), Lazarus and Folkman (1984), Folkman (1984), Folkman and Lazarus (1985) redefined and amplified the previous dimensions of coping strategies. According to them, "Coping refers to cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage (master, reduce, or tolerate) a troubled person-environment relationship." (p.) Coping has two major functions: one regulates distressing emotions, (emotion-focusing coping), the other changes the problem causing the distress, (problem-focused coping). Problem-focused coping is used more frequently in encounters appraised by the person as changeable. In contrast, emotion-focused coping is used more frequently in encounters appraised as unchangeable.

Faculty Development Programs and Faculty Developers

Mathis (1982), in a review of the literature on faculty development notes that:

> "Faculty development" is the term most commonly used today to refer to programs, activities, practices, and strategies that aim both to maintain and to improve the professional competence of individual faculty members in fulfilling their various obligations to a specific institution . . . Faculty development interests range from research and scholarship in a discipline and teaching in a formal classroom to the informed management of one's professional career over time. (p. 646)

Mathis refers to the broad concept of faculty development as the total development of a faculty member as a person or a professional in the academic community (Crow et al., 1976, p. 3) but in reality most faculty development programs comprise activities aimed at improving the teaching-learning process in their institutions; for example, evaluation or rating of instruction and instructors by students; conducting workshops related to teaching methods, curriculum design and evaluation of students, and institutional research and development aimed at the improvement of the teaching learning process.

Faculty developers are the professionals working in centers conducting faculty development programs. There is not any standard formal professional preparation for faculty developers. In most cases they have a background in the social sciences and in particular in education or educational psychology. Some have specialized in higher education studies with particular emphasis on training, adult education, measurement, evaluation, and educational technology. In other cases their formal professional background is in one of the disciplines taught at the university, and their professional background in education and psychology was acquired at a later stage in their career, by formal or informal education. Thus, for some, faculty development is in a way a "second career."

Some faculty developers have joint appointments with other faculties in the university, in particular education and psychology. Some come from disciplines such as medicine or engineering and may still hold appointments in their respective disciplines. Those who have a joint appointment work in general only part time in faculty development. Some may be on academic tenure track positions and others may hold administrative positions with or without tenure. All of these options and conditions of work have important implications to the faculty developer's role at the university, his or her status, sources of satisfaction, reward and job security on one hand, and sources of stress and burnout on the other hand.

The Study

Research Methods: The authors of this paper have been involved for many years in faculty development programs in their own universities, on the Israeli national level and internationally as consultants and facilitators in various faculty development centers. In recent years they have been involved also in research on stress in general and in academia in particular. Thus they were able to conduct preliminary interviews to identify sources of stress and burnout also among faculty developers and identify coping strategies. These interviews took place during international conferences of faculty developers and at times

during visits at faculty development centers in various countries. Based on these open-ended interviews and on an analysis of the general literature on stress and in particular stress in academe, the authors formulated guidelines for in-depth interviewing to be carried out later on in the study. We refer to the activities described above as the first phase of the study.

In the second phase of the study, the population interviewed consisted of twelve university professors, who, in addition to their regular academic roles, are involved in faculty development programs and could be identified as faculty developers. At the time of the interviews, these professors participated in the Annual International Conference on Improving University Teaching held at the University of Haifa in Israel.[2] They came from various countries, and from major research universities.

Data Collection: As the intent of the study was to detect the nature and sources of stress and burnout among faculty developers rather than to provide specific findings to a-priori defined hypotheses, interpretive methods of research seemed to be appropriate (Erickson, 1986). Thus, the selected method of inquiry was analysis of in-depth interviews. Each subject was interviewed by two researchers who had been trained for this purpose. The interview started with an open-ended question: "It appears that stress and burnout have become a common phenomenon among faculty developers. Would you please relate to this topic from you own experience?" The interviewers were instructed not to stop the flow of talk, unless they felt that the interviewees had reached an impasse. They then probed on emerging issues, in case that some clarification seemed to be needed. The interviews were taped, transcribed, and subjected to content-analysis (Fox, 1969).

Data Analysis: The selected unit of analysis was a "thought unit," which could consist of one or more sentences, depending on the interviewees' reference. Key concepts that emerged in each "thought unit" were listed, counted, and classified into broader categories.

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[2]This has been the thirteenth international conference on Improving University Teaching (I.U.T.) sponsored by the University of Maryland and conducted each year in a different country in cooperation with a local university.

Results

The twelve protocols yielded 255 thought units, classified into several broad categories, in the following descending order of frequency:

Symptoms of Stress and Burnout	N = 90; 36.2%
Sources of Stress and Burnout	N = 70; 28.1%
Sources of Satisfaction	N = 50; 16.6%
Coping Strategies	N = 30; 12.2%
Miscellaneous	N = 15; 6.9%

Symptoms of Stress and Burnout. In this category three domains of reference emerged: physical, emotional, and intellectual symptoms, with a frequency distribution of 55%, 30%, and 15% within this category, respectively. The physical symptoms that were mentioned pertained to headaches, to a general feeling of fatigue, and to difficulty in getting up in the morning.

Following are some protocol excerpts that may help in illustrating these categories: "In periods of discussions about faculty development workshops, in which I have to fight for budgets and to convince our administrators that these workshops are needed, I return home with a terrible headache which lasts for several days." "As I am aware of the possible physical consequences of my emotional stress, I become even more stressed, I get more headaches, and this vicious circle goes on and on." Symptoms of an emotional nature pertained to disappointment: "I have been in charge of our faculty development programs for the last five years. At the beginning I was full of hope of changing attitudes and getting higher recognition of the importance of faculty development, but very soon I learned the extent to which the negative attitudes towards this subject are deeply rooted. Now I feel exhausted and tired of fighting, I intend to give up." "It strikes me to see the indifference of some of my colleagues to students' reaction to their teaching, they just don't seem to care. I very often ask myself questions regarding their moral right to be a faculty member."

The cognitive aspect of symptoms of stress pertained to the knowledge and understanding of the difficulties inherent in faculty development. The cognitive aspect is exemplified by, "I can't derive much hope from the literature on attitude and behavioral change, and this is very frustrating."

Sources of Stress and Burnout could be further classified into smaller groups of reference: High expectations and low reward; lack of faculty and administrative support; constant need to adapt, to adopt, and to improvise; and gaps between ideology and reality. The respective distributions are 30%, 25%, 25%, and 20%. A number of interviewees expressed their expectations to get some intrinsic reward, such as recognition of the importance of faculty development, or observed behavioral change. However, the gap between the extent of change and expectations of change was large enough to generate frustration and stress.

Negative attitudes of faculty members towards the activities designed to improve teaching and the lack of administrative support were related in detail. A special emphasis was put on the fact that decisions about faculty development policy were made by non-professionals in this field. As mentioned, an additional source of stress was the constant need to adapt, adopt, and improvise, a need that stemmed from the nature of the faculty development workshops. "The workshop participants come from various disciplines, they have very different needs and expectations, they bring each time problems they expect to be solved in the workshops. I have to be 'on guard' all the time, to see to it that the activities are relevant to differing needs and interests." "Every workshop has to be planned differently, and plans are constantly reshaped, agendas are changed according to the needs that arise. I have to improvise . . . ." "My colleagues and myself invest so much thought and energy—physical and emotional—in these workshops that considering the small effect, one may doubt whether it is worthwhile . . . ." Isolation was an additional source of stress: "My colleagues in the department don't understand why I keep

going on with this activity; they won't cooperate, although they have a lot to contribute to the subject . . . I am all alone; no one to ask for an advice."

Sources of Satisfaction were mentioned along with the sources of stress, sometimes as point/counterpoint and sometimes independently. Some interviewees derived satisfaction from the encounter with colleagues from other disciplines, encounters which were "intellectually challenging." "Meeting and discussing with colleagues from disciplines other than mine enrich me . . . our discussions transcend immediate matters of teaching . . . it is stimulating . . ." Others thought that working in the field of faculty development is prestigious, "I consider it a privilege to work with people of a high intellectual level, people who have original ideas about teaching even though it is not their field of expertise." "It is an enriching experience, although not easy." A rather idealistic view was also apparent. Despite the experienced difficulties and frustration, some interviewees perceived their involvement in faculty development as an important service to the academic community, " . . . and even if it is not reinforced, I still believe it is worthwhile . . . I do it willingly and don't expect to be rewarded for it . . ." Statements such as "I flourish in these activities . . . ," "I enjoy it immensely . . . I feel that I myself grow professionally as I learn a lot from the workshop participants" are some of the expressions of satisfaction and of self-reinforcement.

Coping Strategies were often mentioned along with sources of frustration. Physical aspects of coping were the most frequently mentioned. Among these were: relaxation exercises, jogging, walking: "I have learned some coping techniques, I walk for one hour or so by the river . . . I take a deep breath . . . I meditate . . . ." A more cognitive strategy was also apparent: "The knowledge that I can stop with my faculty development activities and concentrate on my departmental duties gives me the strength to go on . . . I know I don't have to go on if I don't want to . . . ." Another interviewee expressed his opinion that stress can be controlled: "You get burned out to the extent that you want to . . ." However, most of the coping strategies mentioned were in the professional field of

faculty development. Clear goal definition, careful selection of relevant activities, active involvement of participants in workshop planning and implementation, good leadership are some of the conditions that promise success in faculty development and consequently recognition, satisfaction, and prevention of stress.

Miscellaneous. A few references were made about seniority in the field of faculty development, the suggestion being that one should not stay in the field for more than several years and that some rotation among faculty developers should be introduced. "Younger people, who are new in this field, are apt to cope more easily . . . ." Another point of reference pertained to the importance of building teams of faculty developers; "In addition to the professional benefit, such a team may serve as a support group in difficult times."

It should be noted that despite the mentioned difficulties and the expressed feelings of stress, the "tones of reference" (Fox, 1969) were not negative; on the contrary: some optimism and idealism could be sensed.

Analysis and Discussion

According to the theoretical construct adopted in this study, sources of stress could originate, on one hand, in the environment. In our case, it is the higher education system, and its set of beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors towards the role of faculty developers and faculty development programs. On the other hand, it is the person's or faculty developer's perception of these beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that determine the extent to which they become a source of stress and the intensity of this source of stress. Our analysis will focus therefore on the system as a source of stress and on faculty developers and their interaction with the system, as perceivers of stress.

Cross-Cultural Aspects of Sources of Stress, Burnout, and Coping Strategies. One purpose of this study was to identify cross-cultural differences in faculty developers' sources of stress. From the data gathered through the interviews and the literature it is evident that modern higher education systems in many countries are very similar in their

basic tenents. Thus, the environment in which faculty developers work is very similar. As a result we did not identify any significant cultural differences, in the sources of stress burnout and coping strategies.

Higher Education Systems as a Source of Stress. In the discussion on the findings, we enumerated various experiences faculty developers perceive as sources of stress generated by the system. Some of these could be found also in various other systems and work places. Some are situational and temporary, such as experiences resulting from budgetary constraints, and might be eliminated. Others are inherent in the system, part of its basic set of beliefs, attitudes, and daily behaviors. They are difficult to change and will continue to be a source of stress unless faculty developers adapt or change their expectations. For example, the strongest source of stress identified in our study is the system's ambiguity and ambivalence about the role of faculty developers. It would seem logical to assume that by appointing faculty developers and establishing faculty development centers, all of which require resource allocation, the system believes that there is a need to improve teaching learning processes in higher education. On the other hand faculty developers feel that the system is ambiguous about their roles.

Faculty in academe, in all cultures we studied, are expected to function in three areas: research, teaching, and service. Even in liberal arts colleges, which engage mainly or only in teaching, faculty are expected to engage in scholarly work, that will result in some type of publication. While these are universally accepted roles, it is also universally accepted that faculty in higher education are prepared professionals, only for their role as researchers in their disciplines. At present, academicians who teach and engage in service roles are the only high-level professionals who do not receive any pre-service professional preparation to perform these roles, and there is no mandatory requirement for inservice professional training to perform these roles. It is widely accepted among academics all over the world that "those who know it, know also how to teach it," and if by chance they

are not very good teachers, students in higher education are expected to learn in spite of their professors' bad teaching.

Moreover, the faculty are socialized from their early experiences in academia, as undergraduate and graduate students and as teaching and research assistants, that what counts in academia is performance in research and not in teaching or service. This socialization process is intensified as they become assistant professors and continues throughout their constant struggle in the tenure and promotion process. In the United States, where merit ratings affect status and salaries even after one reaches the rank of full professor, the attitude of the system and the faculty towards research, creates pressure to continue in the race for more status, prestige, and financial rewards even if one has to neglect teaching.

Thus, faculty developers have to cope with a system that on one hand appointed them to improve teaching and learning, and on the other hand does not create, through its reward system, the adequate climate to achieve this goal. These prevailing attitudes of the system, which we identified through our interviews as sources of stress, are documented in the literature for decades.

In a report of a White House conference, convened almost four decades ago, to discuss the problems of college and university teaching in the U.S., it was stated that:

> The American college teaching is the only high-level professional man on the American scene who enters upon a career with neither the prerequisite trial of competence nor experience in the use of the tools of his profession. (Belger & Cooper, 1950)

Wilson (1967) suggests that even though teaching is one of the main functions of the university, it is not honored on the campus. He adapts Plato's observation that, "What is honored in a country will be cultivated there," and says, "If teaching is honored on our campuses, it will be cultivated there and will finally be done well there. If it does not find honor, expressed in the respect and prestige granted the teacher by his colleagues and by the dollars paid him by the comptroller, it is not likely to be cultivated nor to improve" (p. 9).

The problem is even more acute than lack of financial or social rewards. The threat of being ridiculed or tagged as a "teacher" creates negative attitudes towards teaching improvement. Nisbet (1976) describes this feeling:

> The once familiar characterization of a faculty member as a good teacher but a poor research man is very likely to be fatal in the university today . . . . As one very candid assistant professor once put it to me in a letter: "I hope I never get labeled in any student or faculty evaluation as a good man with undergraduates. Until my research record is unchallengeable, I can get farther by dull teaching of undergraduates. This will at least leave open the possibility that my research promise may therefore be high.

In the late sixties and early seventies there were indications of a growing concern for the need to improve teaching in higher education. The increasing number of reports, books, and articles published on this subject and the growing number of national and international conferences devoted to this problem were an expression of this growing concern.

Another important development that encouraged faculty developers and all those concerned with university teaching was the growing number of faculty development centers established the world over.

But even during that period, described often as the hay day of faculty development, there were those who were more realistic about the higher education system. Popham, in his paper, "Higher Education's Commitment to Instructional Improvement Programs" (1974), described these programs as a "meek medicine for a major affliction." He doubted whether many of the "tokenistic and half-hearted efforts" would lead to any genuine improvements in the instructional capabilities of many faculty members. According to Popham, in numerous institutions of higher learning the commitment to improve faculty instructional capabilities was largely political, stemming more from public relations motives than from a genuine desire to bring about increased faculty effectiveness. He went on to stress that instructional development agencies needed more power before their efforts toward instructional change would have any impetus. University officials, administrators, and faculty must have greater commitment to the improvement of

instruction, giving the agencies enough personnel and financial resources to evaluate faculty teaching effectiveness and to try to improve it.

In his final analysis, Popham asked whether instructional development programs would become an integral part of any effectively functioning institution of advanced learning or whether they would disappear as a fad. Observing the insufficient commitment of those leading higher education, Popham concluded that "current odds favor the faddish demise."

Unfortunately, Popham's realistic prophecy was fulfilled to a great extent, a few years after he made this statement. When universities and colleges had to curtail some of their programs because of budgetary difficulties, faculty development centers were among the first targeted to be trimmed.

As stated, academe's ambivalent attitude towards teaching and the role of faculty as teachers was not unique to the United States. The Hale Committee (MacKenzie, 1970), which investigated teaching methods in British universities, made the following statement, which could also be extended far beyond the British academic context to which they referred:

> A person who adopts the career of university teacher does not do so in most cases because his main object is to teach. A more usual motive is to pursue research in a subject which had engaged his attention as a student, teaching being regarded as a duty incidental to a life of scholarship. And, whatever the motive which first led him to adopt an academic career, he soon realizes that it is on his achievement as a scholar rather than as a teacher that his advancement in his profession will depend . . . there is certainly little to tempt anyone to give a study of teaching methods time which both inclination and self-interest would lead him to devote to this own subject.

From recent reports in the literature it is evident that the situation described above has not changed significantly. Bok (1986), the President of Harvard, in his discussion of higher learning in the United States calls for two reforms in higher education. These have a chance to succeed only if the system will change its attitude towards the role of teaching. A similar critical analysis of the present higher education system and its attitude towards teaching could be found in a study of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of

Teaching, entitled "College-The Undergraduate Experience in America" (Boyer, 1987a). In his foreword to another study commissioned by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, entitled "The Academic life: Small Worlds, Different Worlds" (Clark, 1987) Boyer states that research universities must upgrade the status of teaching, which is too often undervalued on campuses, by "elevating teachers and teaching to a higher position in the hierarchy of the academic profession, while sustaining and enriching the tradition of scholarship and research, is one of the urgent problems confronting higher education" (p. xvii).

Based on Clark's findings and conclusions, Boyer suggests that good teaching should be weighed as heavily as research in tenure and promotion decisions at research universities. Comprehensive plans for faculty development, in particular in areas related to improvement of teaching learning processes should be available on all campuses (p. xix).

Another recent example of the growing concern with the status of teaching is an open letter of thirty-seven presidents of American universities and colleges, led by Stanford University President Donald Kennedy (Kennedy, October 1987). The letter was sent to 3,300 leaders in higher education in the United States. In the letter President Kennedy suggested that presidents of universities and colleges speak up on the importance of teaching, give higher priorities to their schools of education, and provide an example by improving teaching quality on their campuses. The letter also suggest that institutions should place higher value on teaching as a criteria for promotion. The presidents state that colleges and universities have long been touted for rewarding research over teaching quality in tenure decisions.

It would seem that the recent statements from prestigious leaders in higher education would encourage faculty developers and would reduce their stresses, assuming that there is a change in the system's attitude towards faculty development and faculty developers' role, and there is some hope. But many of them are cynical and disillusioned. A senior faculty developer, who was interviewed recently, reacted to the statements

described above as public relation efforts. "Even the persons who stated it know better that there is no chance to bring about a significant change in the system. Not in their own institutions and certainly not in others. On the contrary the present budgetary constraints require universities to encourage mainly research and researchers since they bring to the university more prestige and financial resources."

Describing the stresses that he and his colleagues experience in the system at present, the faculty developer went on saying: "Role ambiguity and conflict of roles, have been identified in the literature on stress as important sources of stress in the workplace. But in the case of higher education, the problem is even worse. It is not only ambiguity about our roles. The people who state that there is a need to change the system's attitude towards teaching know very well that it is impossible to achieve. Even when the leadership supports the idea, it is lip service and tokenism. Moreover, the system establishes faculty development centers and appoints faculty developers, mainly in response to public pressure. As a matter of fact, if faculty developers will succeed in their task and motivate faculty to devote more time and energy to teaching, it might affect faculty's full commitment to research and thus affect the system's prestige and income. What stresses me most is the double talk of the system when it comes to improve the teaching learning process."

Faculty Developers as a Source of Stress

In the discussion on the theoretical constructs underlying this research we adopted a cognitive definition of stress. Accordingly, "stress is what occurs when the demands of the environment, in the person's eye, clearly exceeds the resources of that person to handle it." For example, in many cases, centers for faculty development are staffed with one professional and a part time-secretary and have a minimal budget. When the system expects and demands that certain activities be performed, such as student evaluation of instruction or a series of workshops and individual consultation for voluntary participants, one person cannot handle all of these, especially when the person involved is also an

academic, and needs to conduct research for his or her own survival on the campus. Faculty developers view this situation as a source of stress. But, it seems that with these types of "demands" faculty developers could cope. What bothers them more is the lack of demands. From faculty developers' point of view, the environment, that is, the academic community should create a "demand" for their services, that is, activities intended to facilitate growth and development in different areas and in particular those related to teaching.

Faculty developers would love to be in a situation in which these demands would even exceed their resources to handle them. In this case, according to the definition of stress, they would become stressed, but it would be a positive and pleasant stress resulting from a challenge and efforts toward self-actualization and self-fulfillment. Sylye (1975, 1976) described this positive stress as *eustress*. But, the expectations and the desires for demands did not come through, and what was supposed to be eustress turned into distress, which is negative stress. What stresses faculty developers most is not the existence of "demands," which they expect the system to exert on them, but the lack of demands. Thus, through their perception and expectations they become the source of their own stresses.

A vivid example of the stress faculty developers encounter by not accepting the reality of academe could be drawn from the following experience. In the recent international conference on Improving University Teaching (IUT), the final guest speaker, who brought the conference to a close, was a former rector of the university and an educational sociologist in his discipline. His talk was entitled "Teaching Research and Other Strategies in the Academic Game" (Schild, 1987). By choosing the metaphor of "game" as related to academic life, one could already sense a certain message about how the speaker perceives the academic world and the rules in that world.

Schild (1987) referred to the traditional collective functions of academe, which are to advance, disseminate, and apply knowledge, but admitted that in reality "major

universities and all those who aspire to be major give relatively low weight to teaching or the process of dissemination of knowledge in evaluation of faculty." Thus, any faculty member who participates in the "academic game" must be realistic and strive to make it where he or she can win, that is, in research, which is the only area in which a faculty member can have visibility outside the university. Teaching and service within the university don't have a chance in this "game." Any faculty developer who tries to promote the cause of teaching, is naive and altruistic and plays a losing game.

Moreover, even faculty developers themselves, who are in academic, tenure track appointments and expect to be rewarded for their involvement in teaching improvement activities by promotion and tenure are taking a risk and endangering their own future at the university unless they are ready to remain in marginal roles in the system.

Improved teaching, as a result of faculty developers' activities, may satisfy students' needs and even provide intrinsic rewards for faculty who were involved in the activities, but in the long run, with the present rules of the "academic game," faculty developers through their activities are endangering the faculty member's chances for promotion and tenure. Thus, instead of service, it becomes "disservice." According to Schild, the present rules of the "academic game" don't have a chance of being changed from within by faculty developers. Only outside pressure of those who employ the graduates of academe, politicians and the public at large, might have a chance in "coercing" academe to change. As long as this will not occur the efforts of faculty developers will achieve only marginal effects. This sober, but realistic analysis was met with great resentment by many of Schild's listeners, who approached him after the talk and expressed their resentment. So strong was the resentment and lack of willingness to face reality that Schild wrote an addendum to his speech, which was published in the conference proceedings. In the addendum he said among other things:

> Some colleagues may be satisfied with the very fact that they possess certain values, such as "the importance of teaching at universities." They may evaluate communications according to the extent to which these offer social support and blissful hopes for the future. . . . True, there are individuals, committed to teaching,

> who seem to disregard the academic game, as I have described it. But even if these individuals should happen to get tenure—as a small minority they don't make too much of a difference to the general academic scene. That scene will only be changed by those who are willing to stomach unpalatable truths—and to play accordingly.

It appears that faculty developers, by their need for self-fulfillment and self-actualization, expect from the system a change of beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that the system, in its present stage, could not go through. By setting for themselves unrealistic expectations and by not accepting reality as it is, they become the source of their own stresses.

As for coping strategies of faculty developers, the persons interviewed in our sample are those who endured the hard financial times and were not dismissed from their jobs, nor did they leave on their own initiative, because they could not cope with the system's ambiguity and conflict regarding their roles. Thus we interviewed a group which coped and "survived" and to a certain extent it is a biased group. Some of them indicated that they have learned to accept and live with the situation described. They do the best they can in performing their roles and enjoy it whenever possible. They cope with daily stresses as they come, and hope for a change. Others indicated they are still at odds with the system and seem to experience great stress and strain. Unless they perceive the environment differently, they will continue to experience stress with all its consequences.

Concluding Remarks

This study dealt with sources of stress of faculty developers. As we have said, they constitute a relatively small group of professionals the world over. The results of this investigation, however, indicating that the greatest source of stress and burnout of faculty developers is the system's set of beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors towards teaching, seem to also to be a source of stress for many regular faculty members in academe and in particular to faculty in major research universities or to those who aspire to be "major." Most of the faculty developers interviewed in this study have been regular faculty members interested in teaching and learning processes. Some still keep their affiliation

with disciplinary departments and perform teaching functions. Thus they share with all concerned with teaching sources of stress and burnout.

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